

MUD IN THE STREET, WHAT'S THE PROBLEM?

The building activity in Lincoln has increased over the last couple of years, in part due to low interest rates. Everything affiliated with building new homes has also increased; the demand for available builders, the rapid completion schedules to complete homes, and the amount of mud tracked off of construction sites and onto City streets.



In Lincoln, mud tracking from construction sites has become a larger issue than in the past. This is due to more construction, less experienced builders, new federal requirements, and the public being more aware that mud in the street is a problem.

New federal regulations require that the City of Lincoln have ordinances and staff to deal with the mud in the street and other stormwater related issues. The City is reviewing current ordinances relative to providing more efficient sediment and erosion control guidance, compliance and enforcement.

One of the typical responses City staff receives when addressing this issue is “Mud in the street. What’s the problem?”. Other responses (we can print) include:

- “I’ve got bigger problems than mud in front of my site to deal with!”
- “When I clean up the street in front of my site, the other guys just track it up again!”
- “It’s just mud! The rain will take care of it!”

Actually the rain does impact the mud in the street. It carries the mud or dirt to the nearest stream, lake or neighborhood stormwater detention pond. Here it can cause problems that are significantly more expensive to correct than if it had been cleaned up or kept off of the street correctly. Home owners and business owners are then left to deal with this issue, that many times they didn’t create.

Mud in the street is also a safety issue. Vehicles driving on streets with mud can have a difficult time stopping. Persons working at these sites also are at risk.

What can you do to keep your site in compliance and avoid potential warning or notice letters, fines, bills, and other legal actions? Listed below are some fairly simple things that can be done:

- Remove mud tracked onto the street daily, this can be done by using a smooth bucket loader or by hand if it is just a few big clods.
- Ask the sub contractors to remove mud they track.
- Knock the mud off of tires with a flat bladed shovel as soon as you are on the pavement or gravel and place it back on the site.
- Park on the street when possible, instead of next to the house in the mud.
- Provide a graveled construction entrance with a geotextile liner, from the foundation to the street, your sub contractors will appreciate it, and it will cut tracking and provide a compacted base for the driveway.

The City will be providing additional articles in upcoming months to address sediment and erosion control issues in Lincoln. If you have questions about this subject please contact Gary Lacy of Public Works and Utilities at 441-4957.